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ABSTRACT

Recreational gymnastics skills for kindergarten through 12th grade students are identified in this guide. An introduction states the rationale for gymnastics, clarifies terms, and supplies equipment and professional development information. The gymnastics skills are broken down into three levels. Skills decribed in the first level include 19 static elements, 4 landings, 6 rotations, 1 swing, 3 springs, and 7 exercises involving jumping and height. Skills in level 2, recommended for the fourth grade and above, repeat many of the first level skills with more complex variations. Third level skills, which are mentioned briefly, involve more than one dominant movement pattern. The characteristics of each exercise are outlined, and teaching tips and spotting techniques are included. Appendices contain recommended readings, resources available for coaches in Winnipeg (Manitoba, Canada), and sample lesson plans for second and seventh grade students. (FG)

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GYMNASTICS

A Supplement to the K-12 Physical

Education Curriculum Guide

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Rationale

Gymnastics is a challenging sport, yet one in which all students can achieve some degree of success. Long before the development of modern ball games, gymnastics was popular with both the amateur athlete and the professional, the masses and the experts. By incorporating or extending the components of virtually all other physical fitness activities, gymnastics provides a valuable feature of the physical education program of the school.

Clarification of Terms

Artistic or Olympic gymnastics is a competitive sport in which gymnasts compete for top honors in specified events. This is not the program the schools offer to children.

Recreational gymnastics is a non-competitive sport that takes place in an enjoyable learning atmosphere and encompasses a wide variety of activities such as pyramid building, artistic gymnastics, and rope climbing. This term is more appropriate when speaking of school programs in which students become more fit and have fun while learning gymnastics fundamentals.

Professional Development Information

Teachers can participate in Level One and Two Certification Courses offered by the Canadian Gymnastics Federation to become more competent in the area of gymnastics. These courses are offered at various times of the year, in different areas of Manitoba. More information can be obtained about them by contacting the Gymnastics Coordinator at the Administrative Centre for Recreation and Sport (see page 36).

It is recommended that schools purchase the Level One and Level Two manuals as they are excellent sources of information and are referred to throughout this resource package. The manuals are available when taking the Level One and Two courses or from the Gymnastics Coordinator at the Administrative Centre for Recreation and Sport.

Equipment

The following list indicates the variety of equipment which may be included in the gymnastics program. The items that are followed by an asterisk (*) are essential.

Mats*	Parallel Bars*	Wall Ladder
Ropes*	Single Bar--High Bar*	Crash Mats
Benches*	Uneven Parallel Bars*	Trampolette
Vaulting Boxes*	Vaulting Horse	Trampoline
Balance Beam*	Beat Boards*	Agility Boxes
Low Balance Beam	Spring Board	South Hamptom Climbing Frame with parallel bars and rings
Rings	Pommel Horse	

Instructions for the construction of vaulting boxes, balance beams, and a high bar can be found in Physical Education for Elementary School Children by Glenn Kirchner.

Information on purchasing equipment for gymnastics can be obtained from the Technical Coordinator of Gymnastics at the Administrative Centre for Recreation and Sport.

Definition of Terms

Body Alignment:

Body alignment is the term used to describe a strong and stable body position. This position is controlled by the abdominal and lower back muscles. The hips are tilted forward and the seat tucked in.

An arched lower back is less efficient for stability and spring. A straight body is aesthetically more pleasing.

Activities to improve body alignment are given under Teaching Tips for the Headstand.

Spotting:

Spotting refers to the provision of support and assistance to gymnasts in the completion of a gymnastic element or activity.

Example 1 - Spotting for a forward walkover

The gymnast kicks up to a handstand. The spotter stands facing the gymnast's side and places the hand closest to the gymnast under the shoulder of the gymnast, away from the centre of gravity to assist in rotation. The other hand is placed under the gymnast's lower back, to support the weight of the gymnast.

In the example of a forward walkover and in any elements with rotation around the lateral axis, two principles of spotting are observed:

1. when supporting the gymnast, one hand must be at the centre of gravity;

2. when assisting a gymnast with rotation around the lateral axis, force must be applied from the centre of gravity.

Example 2 - Spotting for a back pullover

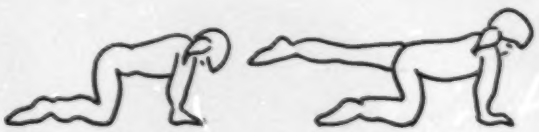
The gymnast performs a back pullover on the low bar. The gymnast kicks up with one leg, and uses the arms to pull the body up and over the bar. The hands are in overgrip. To assist the gymnast, the spotter provides support with the hand closest to the gymnast, under the hips (at the centre of gravity). The other hand assists in rotation by supporting and raising the gymnast's kicking leg (away from the centre of gravity), until the gymnast reaches front support.

Level One Readiness Levels

Skills	Grade												
	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Statics													
Knee scale	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Arabesque	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Straddle lean	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Straddle support			x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Bridge	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Tucked V-sit	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Headstand			x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Tripod stand	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Handstand			x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Tuck handstand	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Momentary handstand		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Shoulder balance	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Splits			x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Front support		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Rear support	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Long hang	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Inverted hang	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Rear support hang	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Front support hang	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Landings													
Landing on the feet	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x

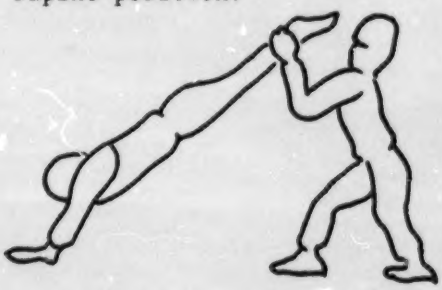
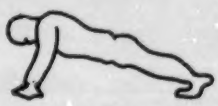
Skills	Grade												
	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Prone fall from the knees	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Prone fall from the feet			x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Break fall			x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Rotations													
Forward roll	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Forward roll over a bar	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Backward roll	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Back pullover		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Cartwheel	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Turns	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Swing													
Long hang swing	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Spring													
Spring from 2 feet	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Spring from 1 foot	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Handstand hops				x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Flight and Height													
Rope climbing (above head height)	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Swinging (from floor to floor)	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Swinging (from box to box)			x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Swinging (holding object between knees)			x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x

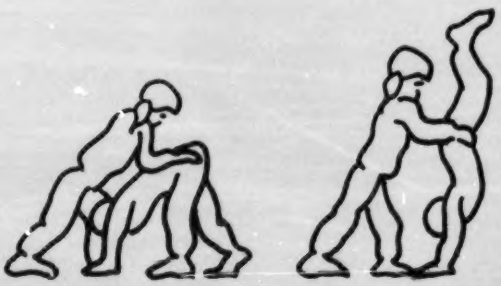
Skills	Grade												
	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Rope climb (up one rope, down another)				x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Low bar skills on the high bar				x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Climbing on high apparatus	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x

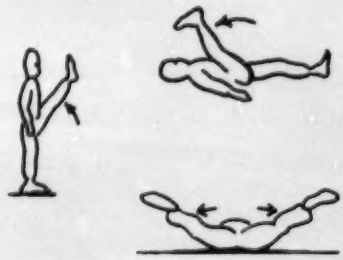
CONCEPT	SKILLS	TEACHING TIPS
I. Statics Principles to consider to improve stability: A. The centre of gravity must be over the base of support. B. The larger the base, the more stable the object. C. The lower the centre of gravity, the more stable the object. D. In a segmented body, each segment's centre of gravity must be over the centre of gravity of the segment below. For further explanation, see Level One Manual, pages 45-47.	1. Knee Scale The gymnast balances on the hands (fingers spread) and knees, with weight evenly distributed. One leg is extended backward and lifted above the horizontal. The arms are extended, head lifted and the back is straight.  2. Arabesque Standing with back straight, the gymnast balances on one foot, raising the extended leg backward off the floor and below the horizontal. The working leg and supporting leg are both extended. The arms are raised. 3. Straddle Lean The gymnast sits in a straddle position, knees facing up, legs and feet extended, back straight. The gymnast leans forward, keeping weight on the "sitting bones" until s(he) can successfully place the chest on the floor.	This element is first performed on the floor. Once the gymnast has perfected it by extending each leg, s(he) should progress to a balance bench, lessening the size of the base of support, then to a low beam. Finally, the skill can be performed on a high beam, adding the element of height. This element has a small base so it is important that the gymnast keeps the upper body straight and over the base. Once this skill can be successfully performed on the floor, it can be done on a beam. Another skill can be added before it to increase the difficulty; e.g., forward roll walkout to arabesque. Unless the gymnast is already flexible at the hip joint, progress will be slow. The following are activities to improve flexibility: a) Sitting in a straddle, the gymnast leans to the side with the upper body, then faces his/her leg, circles to the front, faces his/her leg. Stretches again to the side, stretches to sitting, with the back straight.

CONCEPT	SKILLS	TEACHING TIPS
		b) Partners sit facing in a straddle position, feet to feet. Keeping the legs straight, they join hands. One partner leans forward as the other leans back; then they reverse positions. c) In a deep lunge position, the gymnast stretches down, turns to the side, then turns again, stretching other leg.
	4. Straddle Support The gymnast stands with the legs straddled, then leans forward, placing the hands between the feet. The weight shifts so support is now on hands and feet. The legs are extended and the feet kept parallel. 	The support should be successfully completed on the floor, a box horse and then on a bench. This position is an important progression on most apparatus. It is important that the chest be as close to the legs as possible. The closer the feet, the more efficient the skill for later progressions.
	5. Bridge The gymnast lies on his/her back, hands on the floor beside the ears, fingers pointing to the shoulders. The gymnast pushes up to extended arms. Legs can remain slightly bent when first learning the skill. The shoulders should be directly over the hands.	<u>Shoulder and back flexibility are extremely important</u>. The gymnast should progress to straight legs. The following activities are to improve strength and flexibility: a) Walk forward and backward in a bridge position.

CONCEPT	SKILLS	TEACHING TIPS
		b) Relay game - the team lifts up into bridges so that the member at the end of the line can roll a ball through. Gymnasts return to a lying position until the roller retrieves the ball and the next member takes a turn. c) The gymnast bends forward at hips, rests hands on the beam, and gently bounces, stretching shoulder joint.
	6. Tucked V-Sit Lying on the back, the gymnast lifts the legs, bent at the knees, and the upper body in one motion. The gymnast balances on the buttocks.	This strengthens the abdominal muscles. Abdominal strength is essential for correct body alignment and other gymnastic skills.
	7. Headstand The gymnast forms a triangle with the head and hands (fingers spread, hands facing forward). The hands are shoulder width apart. The legs are slowly drawn in, tucked and then extended upwards. SPOTTING: The spotter stands at the back of the gymnast, supporting the hips. The spotter has one foot between the gymnast's hand and head and is standing in a lunge position. 	Progressions a) Tripod balance - knees rest on elbows b) Tucked headstand c) Fully extended headstand In a headstand, the body must be straight and controlled. All body segments must be over the base of support. The following activities improve the capacity for correct body alignment: a) Gymnasts stand in groups of three. The centre person tightens his/her abdominals and buttocks; keeping a straight body, s(he) leans forward into the hands of the spotter in front. The centre gymnast is tilted back and forth, first with hands by the side and then with arms extended above the head.

CONCEPT	SKILLS	TEACHING TIPS
		b) The gymnast is in a push-up position, arms extended. The partner lifts the gymnast's legs at the ankles (like a lever). The gymnast being lifted must remain straight. Repeat from a supine position.
		
		c) Starting in a push-up position, the gymnast rotates laterally to finish in a supported supine position (rear support). The body is kept tight and straight.
		

CONCEPT	SKILLS	TEACHING TIPS
		d) The gymnast begins in a prone position, arms extended above the head, wrists flexed. Two people lifting at the hips and thighs lift the gymnast to a straight handstand, and then lower by reversing. e) The gymnast performs a handstand against the wall, placing as much of the body as possible against the wall. f) Lying in a supine position, the gymnast contracts the abdominal muscles until the lower back is flat on the floor. g) Tuck V-sit-ups; V-sit-ups h) Log rolls - legs and chest lifted off the floor
	8. Handstand The gymnast places hands on the floor, shoulder width apart, fingers spread, arms extended. The head is relaxed. In a lunge position, the gymnast kicks up to the vertical. As in the headstand, all body segments should be over the base. 	Progressions a) Tuck handstand - from a two-foot takeoff, the gymnast lifts hips to momentary inverted position. b) Kick to a momentary handstand.

CONCEPT	SKILLS	TEACHING TIPS
	SPOTTING: The gymnast begins with both hands on the floor. The spotter supports the gymnast at the hips as s(he) kicks to a handstand.	
	9. Shoulder Balance The gymnast, lying in a supine position, lifts legs and hips off the floor to an inverted position with legs extended upwards, and balances on shoulders, arms and hands.	This skill improves lower back and abdominal strength. It is also an important progression to the handstand forward roll. Variations: Starting in a shoulder stand, the gymnast lowers knees to one side of the head, extends the legs and lowers them to the other side.
	10. Splits: Stride The gymnast begins in a lunge, and lowers his/her body until the legs are split completely. The hips must remain facing forward or "square." Splits: Straddle The gymnast begins in a straddle sit and pushes legs to a wide split position.	Activities to improve flexibility at the hip joint: a) partner-assisted stretch - the partner presses the legs at points marked, the gymnast resists, both relax, then the partner presses again;  b) leg lifts - standing and supine; c) deep lunges front and side;

CONCEPT	SKILLS	TEACHING TIPS
		d) other activities under Straddle Lean - Teaching Tips (see page 6).
	11. Front Support This element is performed on the bars, beam, or sidehorse. Facing forward with both body and arms straight, the gymnast leans against the equipment, supporting his/her body weight at pelvis level.	An overgrip is used for doing a front support on bars. See page 47 in the Level One Manual for diagrams of supports.
	12. Rear Support On the bar, beam or sidehorse, the gymnast leans the back of the pelvis (top of thighs) against the equipment, supporting a straight body with straight arms.	
	13. Hangs: Vertical or long hang The overgrip is used. The body is straight and well extended. Inverted hang This hang can be done on the rings, parallel bars or single bar. There are three body positions - pike, tucked and straight. An overgrip is used for all. Front support or rear support hang The gymnast uses an overgrip on the high bar, resting the top of the thighs on the low bar. In a front support, the body faces the high bar. In a rear support, the gymnast faces away from the high bar. In both positions, the body is straight.	The hanging positions and grips used should be learned by the gymnasts to improve their strength and flexibility. The various grips and hanging positions lead into swings and assist in movement sequencing.

CONCEPT	SKILLS	TEACHING TIPS
II. Landings Principles to consider for controlled and safe landings: A. The landing should be absorbed over the greatest time and distance possible. B. The landing should be absorbed over the greatest area possible. Refer to pages 56-58 in the Level One Manual for further information.	1. Landing on the Feet The gymnast jumps off an apparatus, absorbing the momentum by landing first on the balls of the feet and then the heels. The legs should be bent and apart to produce a lower centre of gravity and more stable body position.	Variations Jumping from bench to floor forwards and backwards Jumping from bench, tuck jump, and land Jumping over bench Jumping from chest height to floor Jumping backwards from hip height Jumping forwards from hip height, with a half turn Jumping forwards from hip height, with a full turn (Turns should be learned from the floor first before they are done from a height.)
	2. Landing Forward a) Prone fall from knees The gymnast is balanced on the knees, with the body straight. The head turns to the side during the fall. The gymnast falls forward, absorbing the weight with the arms. b) Prone fall from feet With a straight body, head turned to side, the gymnast falls forward. The weight is absorbed with the arms.	The gymnast's body must be kept straight. No part of the body lands before the hands. The arms bend, absorbing the weight over as great a time as possible.

CONCEPT	SKILLS	TEACHING TIPS
	3. Landing Backward a) Break fall The gymnast begins in a squat position and falls back, placing the hands close to the body with fingers pointing forward, and lands on as much area of the body as possible. The hands are used to absorb the landing.	
III. Rotations Principle to consider for rotation: Force must be applied away from the axis to cause rotation. For further information, see pages 58-71 in the Level One Manual.	1. Forward Roll From a squat position, the gymnast places the hands on the floor shoulder width apart, tucks the chin to the chest and extends the legs, lifting the hips up and over the head. The hands and the shoulders support the weight in the roll. The gymnast then remains tucked until back on the feet. 2. Forward Roll Over a Bar From a front support, hands in overgrip, the gymnast lowers the upper body over the bar. The gravitational pull provides the momentum for rotation. The gymnast circles the bar and finishes in a standing position facing the bar.	Once the gymnast has mastered this skill, many variations can be introduced. Forward roll to: Supine position Squat Straddle sit Walkout Crossed legs - half turn Hands between legs, push up to straddle stand Dive forward roll Dive forward roll over an object Forward roll: Down an incline Up an incline From a bench Over a bench On a bench length On a beam with mats

CONCEPT	SKILLS	TEACHING TIPS
	3. Backward Roll In a squat position, the gymnast falls back, placing hands on the floor beside the ears (fingers facing shoulders), and lifts the hips over the head, pushes up with the hands, extends the arms, and finishes on the feet.	Progressions a) The gymnast rocks back and forth on the back. b) Rocking in a tuck position, the gymnast releases the knees but keeps them close to the chest, then places hands beside head on each rock. c) The gymnast starts in a squat, leans forward, pushes with hands to start momentum, rolls on to the back in a tucked position, placing hands by the head. When the hips are over the head and shoulders, the arms are extended. d) The gymnast makes a complete backward roll, finishing on the feet. Variations a) Backward roll to: Knees Front support on the floor Straddle Walkout Pike (legs kept straight) b) Straddle stand, hands placed between legs to assist in sitting back, roll to straddle. c) Roll: Down an incline Up an incline On a bench Using two ropes

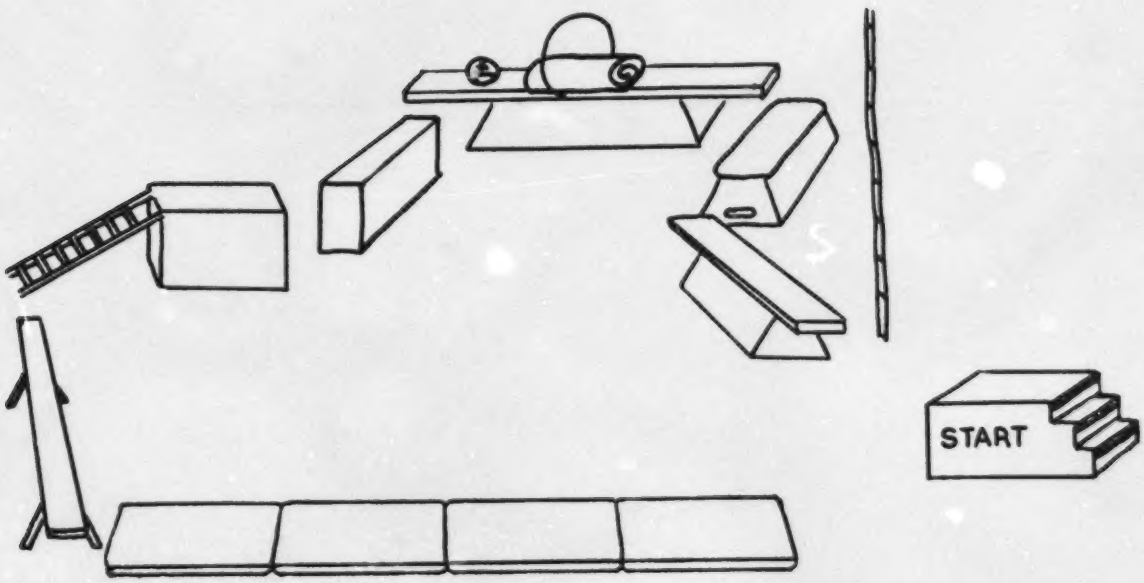
CONCEPT	SKILLS	TEACHING TIPS
	4. Back Pullover on a Bar The gymnast stands facing the bar, hands in overgrip. The gymnast lifts both legs, or kicks up one leg, brings the hips to the bar, then over. Bent arms assist in the lifting of the hips. SPOTTING: The spotter supports the gymnast under the hips until the hips are at the bar, then places pressure on the lower legs to complete rotation. 5. Cartwheel The gymnast steps forward with the weight on the bent left leg, places the left hand to the left on the floor, lifts the right leg. The right hand is placed on the floor in line with the left hand. The gymnast lifts up, passing through the vertical. The gymnast lands on the right foot facing the direction from which s(he) came.	Progressions a) The gymnast begins on a raised platform, lessening the distance between the kick-off and bar. b) Back pullover from the low bar to high bar: from a rear hang, with one foot on the low bar, the gymnast kicks off the low bar to get the hips up and over the high bar. Progressions a) The gymnast first steps sideways into a handstand or cartwheels into a handstand before stepping down; then cartwheels into a handstand and cartwheels out. These can be practiced against a wall or between hanging ropes. b) The gymnast places the hands on a bench and cartwheels over the bench. c) Cartwheel from a kneeling position on piled mats. Reaching forward with the hands, the gymnast places them, first one and then the other, on the mats, then lifts through a handstand and places the feet on the floor in two counts.

CONCEPT	SKILLS	TEACHING TIPS
		d) Using a circle on floor, the gymnast does a cartwheel, placing hands and feet on the circle. As skill increases, the circle is enlarged. e) One-hand cartwheel f) Dive cartwheel
	6. Turns The gymnast steps on one foot, pivots or jumps, completing a quarter, half, three-quarters, or full turn on the feet. Bringing the arms in on the turn makes it more efficient. Turns can be varied by changing levels, swinging one leg forward or backward, or by leaping and turning.	When jumping and turning, the gymnast should be at the height of the jump before turning. Jumping off a box gives the gymnast the idea of maximum height in a turn. "Spotting" in a turn is done by selecting a spot on the wall and using it to determine when the end of the turn has been reached. Focussing on a fixed point prevents the body from over-rotating. Turns should be practiced in both directions.
IV. Swing Principle of swing to get maximum amplitude: The centre of gravity must be as far away from the support as possible. For further information, see pages 72-76 in the Level One Manual.	1. Long Hang Swing Beginning in a long hang, hands in overgrip, the gymnast pumps to initiate a swing. The body can be slightly hollow (back bent). The head is between the arms in a neutral position. At the bottom of the swing, the body slightly pikes to increase the swing. On the backswing (zero velocity), the gymnast changes the grip, and regrasps the bar. *All dismounts or regrasps are done at the end of the backswing, never on the forward swing.	<u>Progressions</u> a) Relaxed long hang swing b) Swing from a platform c) Push the gymnast to top of backswing and swing forward d) Let the gymnast get the feel of "pumping" or initiating own swing. e) Cast or push away from low bar with feet, grip on high bar.

CONCEPT	SKILLS	TEACHING TIPS
		f) From front support, cast out to horizontal into arms of spotter.
V. Spring		
Principles to consider for spring: A. All forces must act in a desired direction to apply force effectively. B. Force is more effective when applied on a rigid body. More information can be obtained on pages 77-81 in the Level One Manual. Note: A spring from one foot is normally called a "leap"; a spring from two feet is referred to as a "jump."	1. Spring from Two Feet (Jump) a) Springing along floor in rapid succession b) Springing onto a box and immediately off c) Springing successively over many objects d) Springing from beat board to box, hands lifted off before feet land e) Jump from tucked position f) Stride jumps g) Dive forward roll h) Forward roll; jump up i) Straddle jump; hands reach to knees or toes j) Jump half turn; full turn k) Jump from two feet; land on one 2. Spring from One Foot (Leap) Split leap: The gymnast springs from one foot, splits the legs in the air and lands on the other foot. 3. Spring from the Hands Handstand hops - The gymnast lunges into a handstand, and keeping the body straight, springs to the vertical.	Springing is an important aspect of gymnastics, and there are many activities to improve a gymnast's ability to spring. Leaps should be done using alternate legs as takeoff leg. Body alignment is important for an effective leap. Takeoff is from a demiplie to impart more force (heel down, knee bent). Such activities as animal walks, chin-ups, push-ups, will improve the strength of the shoulders and arms. For springing, the gymnast needs power, that is, strength and speed. To improve power, activities such as handstand hops or time-limited strengthening exercises can be done.

CONCEPT	SKILLS	TEACHING TIPS
VI. Flight and Height Flight and height make gymnastics an exciting and unique sport. Children are fond of playing with height and flight, so let them become familiar with all aspects of it.	1. Rope Activities a) Climbing - to above head height - to top of rope b) Swinging - from the floor to land on the floor - from box to floor - from one box to another - holding object between knees - climb up one rope, climb down the rope beside it 2. Bar Activities There are several activities here. Generally, all skills done on the low bar can be done on the high bar, once the skills are mastered. The bars can be used for climbing and jumping to practice landing as well to familiarize the gymnast with height. 3. Vaulting Box Activities Use of the vaulting box lends height and flight to such basic skills as jumping, turning and landing; e.g., jump from one high box to another, run squat on box and immediately jump off. 4. Various Equipment Activities a) Place objects such as a medicine ball, rolled mat and hoop, along a beam or high boxes. The gymnast makes his/her way through the obstacles.	Rope activities improve upper body strength as well as familiarize the children with flight and height. Progress must be made sequentially and carefully to promote a positive attitude toward flight and height. The tasks should be kept fairly simple so the gymnasts can improve upon the skill requirements and, at the same time, become familiar with the height and space they are working in.

CONCEPT	SKILLS	TEACHING TIPS
	The objects and the height make this a challenging activity for dynamic balance.	
	b) Equipment is set up in a circuit so that gymnasts can move around the gymnasium without floor contact.	First let the gymnasts become familiar with the apparatus; then provide challenges to increase the difficulty of the task.



Level Two Readiness Levels*

Skills	Grade												
	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Statics													
Straddle support					x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Scale				x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
V-sit			x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Headstand, tuck, shoot to handstand					x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Cross support			x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Landings													
Swedish fall				x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Jump to prone fall					x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Shoulder roll (forward)				x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Shoulder roll (back)				x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Rotations													
Front hip circle					x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Forward roll on parallel bars					x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Forward roll on rings					x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Back hip circle			x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Front limber				x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Back limber				x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Front walkover					x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Back walkover					x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Round-off					x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x

*Level Two skills can generally be started at the grade 4 level. Some may be started earlier, depending on the ability of the class.

Skills	Grade												
	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Swing													
Front support swing			x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Underswings					x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Spring													
Cross support hops					x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Wheelbarrel springs					x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Front support hops on floor					x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Mule kicks				x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Squat vault					x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Flight and Height													
Mini-tramp activities					x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x

LEVEL TWO SKILLS

CONCEPT	SKILLS	TEACHING TIPS
I. Statics	1. Straddle Support Refer to Level One Skills for the description of this skill.	
	When the gymnast has mastered this skill on the floor, it can be practiced on a bench, box, or beam, and then on a parallel bar.	It is important that the gymnast bring the chest and head as close to the legs as possible. This skill provides for an excellent progression to swing elements on the bar.
	2. Scale The next progression after the arabesque (see page 6) is the scale. The gymnast balances on one foot; the other leg is extended backwards above the horizontal. The body is straight, and the arms raised.	Skills can be added before and after this skill to increase the difficulty and improve continuity in sequences. E.g., forward walkover, scale, forward roll; and split leap, step scale.
	3. V-sit The gymnast sits with the legs held high and extended. The hands support to the rear. The arms are straight.	This static can be practiced on the beam, benches, or box. V-sit-ups help improve the abdominal strength necessary to keep the legs high.
	4. Headstand, Tuck, Shoot to Handstand The gymnast begins in a headstand, then brings the legs tucked in. At the same time the legs are thrust up, the arms extend, lifting the gymnast to a handstand.	Spotters can assist the gymnast in the lift by grasping the legs and lifting as the gymnast pushes up.
	5. Cross Support The gymnast is between the parallel bars and grasps the bars, one in each hand, using an overgrip. S(he) then raises the body with	This is an important progression for many skills on the parallel bars. It should also be learned with support under the arms.

CONCEPT	SKILLS	TEACHING TIPS
	the weight supported on both arms, the body remaining straight. The body should not sink at the shoulders.	
II. Landings	1. Swedish Fall The gymnast stands with correct body alignment, then falls forward, turning the head to the side and raising and extending one leg backward. No part of the body touches the floor before the hands. The arms bend to absorb the fall.	
	2. Jump to Prone Fall Refer to Level One Skills (page 13) for a description of a prone fall. Add a jump before the prone fall.	Prone falls are used to land safely from a spring. By jumping first, the gymnast practices that aspect of the fall.
	3. Shoulder Roll Over Right Shoulder The gymnast leans forward in a deep lunge, right leg forward. Reaching down and back with the right arm, the gymnast lifts the hips and lowers the shoulder blade to the floor and rotates forward over the shoulder.	<u>Progressions</u> a) Working with a partner, the gymnast reaches back with the right arm and across the body to grasp the hand of a partner. The gymnast then pushes off with the feet to initiate rotation. As the gymnast begins to roll, s(he) looks back at the partner and rolls over the right shoulder. b) Shoulder roll after landing from a height c) Shoulder roll from bench d) Shoulder roll over bench

CONCEPT	SKILLS	TEACHING TIPS
	4. Backward Shoulder Roll The gymnast falls back from a squat position, bending the knees. The hands face forward to allow the elbows to bend, absorbing the pressure of the fall. The feet and hips are brought over one shoulder. The gymnast finishes on the knees.	<u>Progressions</u> a) From a shoulder balance, drop the knees to one side of the head and then the other. b) Backward shoulder roll from a jump. c) Jump backwards from a box, land and back shoulder roll.
III. Rotations	1. Front Hip Circle The gymnast leans forward on the bar from a front support. The gravitational pull assists in the rotation. When the body reaches the horizontal, the gymnast pikes slightly, shortening the radius of rotation, giving enough momentum to return to front support. SPOTTING: The spotter stands to the side of the gymnast. One hand is on the lower back to support, and the other hand is on the thighs to assist in rotation.	<u>Progressions</u> a) The gymnast leans forward, closes the body quickly and grabs the back of the thighs. The forearms are on the bar as s(he) circles. b) Front hip circle, legs tucked in c) Front hip circle, legs straight d) Korbut front hip circle - the arms are extended obliquely up in front during the first half, and move downward to grasp the bar in the second half. The arm position increases the speed of the forward rotation.
	2. Forward Roll on Parallel Bars The gymnast begins in a straddle sit with one leg touching each bar. S(he) grasps the bars, dropping the shoulders forward and lifting the hips up and over the shoulders. The shoulders support the weight. The gymnast finishes the roll in a straddle sit.	<u>Progressions</u> a) The gymnast begins by standing in piked position on the bars, with weight supported on both feet and shoulders. With the hips already above the shoulders, the gymnast need apply only a little force to initiate rotation.

CONCEPT	SKILLS	TEACHING TIPS
		b) The gymnast continues rolling past the straddle sit position, by bringing the legs together and supporting weight under the arms in an underarm hang.
	3. Forward Roll on Rings The gymnast grasps the rings with an overgrip. S(he) jumps, raising the hips above the head. The arms are bent. The push with the legs and the dropping of the shoulders initiate rotation. The rings are kept close to the hips.	The gymnast begins on a raised platform to make it easier to get the hips up and over.
	4. Front Limber On a mat, the gymnast lifts up into a handstand, extending through the shoulders and arching the back. The shoulders lean in the opposite direction to the direction the legs are moving. The gymnast moves through a bridge position, pushing off the hands and lifting forward and upward. The hips lift upward. SPOTTING: Support is given at the centre of gravity, under the back. Assistance with rotation is given at the shoulder.	The next progression is the front walkover. It is the same as the front limber, except that the legs remain split the entire time they are off the floor and the gymnast lands on one foot. This, as well as the front limber, can be practiced from a raised level to land on the floor.
	5. Back Limber On a mat, the gymnast raises the arms over the head. Legs are slightly apart. Lean back, stretching through the shoulders and upper back, until the hands meet the floor. As the hands touch, the feet lift off the floor. The gymnast passes through a handstand and brings both feet to the floor.	The next progression is the back walkover. This is the same as a back limber, except the legs are split the entire time they are off the floor, and the gymnast begins and finishes on one foot. This can be practiced by beginning with the feet on a low box, lifting up into a bridge and then kicking over.

CONCEPT	SKILLS	TEACHING TIPS
	SPOTTING: The spotter stands to the side of the gymnast, supporting the centre of gravity in the small of the back and assisting in rotation by lifting the lead leg of the gymnast.	
	6. Round-off The gymnast begins as with a cartwheel. The legs are brought together at the vertical, and a quarter turn is performed. The round-off is finished with the legs together and the gymnast facing the direction from which s(he) came. The gymnast achieves spring by "snapping the body up" as the legs come down.	<u>Progressions</u> a) Cartwheel, finishing in desired direction b) One arm cartwheel quarter turn c) Kneeling cartwheel d) Kneeling round-off e) Round-off from low box (hands on box, feet on floor) <u>"Snap Up" Progressions</u> a) Handstand and bring legs down quickly behind the hands, landing with bent legs. The legs are in front of the hips. Snap upper body backwards. b) Handstand from a raised platform; snap up.
IV. Swing	1. Front Support Swing The gymnast begins in front support, hands in overgrip. The arms bend and the body pikes for momentum. The gymnast rapidly extends the hips, swinging the legs back, and leans forward so that the body rises upward. The arms are straight at the height of the swing, and the body is straight.	<u>Progressions</u> a) The gymnast swings legs back and forth in a front support position leaving the hips on the bar.

CONCEPT	SKILLS	TEACHING TIPS
		b) The gymnast performs a front support swing and lands on the floor or on the top of a box. c) The gymnast performs a front support swing and returns to the bar, piking slightly at the hips.
	2. Back Hip Circle The gymnast begins in front support, hands in overgrip, then does a front support swing, casts back, away from the bar with a hollow chest position. As the body returns, the gymnast drops the shoulders behind the bar and pikes slightly. Eccentric force pulls the gymnast around the bar. SPOTTING: The spotter stands to the side of the gymnast. One hand supports the centre of gravity, the hips. The other hand assists in rotation away from the centre of gravity, the legs.	
	3. Underswing Dismount The gymnast begins in a front support, hands in overgrip. The shoulders are dropped back to start rotation. The arms are straight and the hips are slightly piked and close to the bar. Once the body is under the bar (open the body), the gymnast extends the hips and the legs move upward and forward in an arc. The arms pull on the bar when the body is piked and push when the body opens. The hands release the bar and the gymnast lands on his/her feet. Throughout, the head should remain between the arms.	Progressions a) Underswing from a two-foot take-off from the floor or from a raised platform, rather than a front support. b) From a front support, underswing dismount with legs tucked. c) Front support underswing dismount. d) Front support underswing, half turn at zero velocity point.

CONCEPT	SKILLS	TEACHING TIPS
V. Spring	1. Spring from Hands a) Cross Support Hops Keeping a straight body and not sinking into the shoulders, the gymnast hops along the parallel bars with hands in overgrip. b) Wheelbarrel Springs With a partner supporting the gymnast's legs, the gymnast springs from the hands and claps. 2. Spring from Hands and Feet a) The gymnast is on the floor in a prone position with arms straight. S(he) springs by simultaneously pushing from the hands and the feet, moving laterally around the circle like the hands of a clock. b) The gymnast begins in a squat position, places hands on the floor, springs off the feet and then off the hands. These are called "mule kicks" and can be done forwards and backwards. c) The gymnast runs, takes a step, springs off both feet, tucking the legs and placing both hands and then feet on the vaulting box. S(he) then releases the hands and springs off the feet to a soft landing.	Begin with the vaulting box at a low level.
VI. Flight and Height	1. Mini-Tramp or Springboard Activities a) Jump from a mini-tramp or springboard, keeping the body straight.	

CONCEPT	SKILLS	TEACHING TIPS
	b) Spring from a mini-tramp or springboard and perform different shapes in the air; e.g., tuck, straddle, straight body. The gymnast performs the shape at the height of the spring. c) Spring from a mini-tramp or board and catch an object which has been thrown, such as a bean bag or ball, before landing.	

LEVEL THREE SKILLS

Elements involving more than one dominant movement pattern are considered Level Three skills. The Coaching Certification Manual; Level Two contains diagrams, skill descriptions, and progressions for these skills as well as spotting techniques. The Level One and Two Technical Courses will also give teachers a better understanding of these concepts.

Skills	Grade												
	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Rotations plus spring; e.g., front handspring						x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Rotations plus swing; e.g., underswing half turn						x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Rotations plus flight and height; e.g., back somersault								x	x	x	x	x	x

APPENDICES

APPENDICES

A. Bibliography

Kinsman, Tom (Ed.). Canadian Gymnastics Federation Coaching Certification Program; Level One. Vanier City, Ontario: Canadian Gymnastics Federation, 1977. (Address: 333 River Road, Vanier City, Ontario K1L 8B9.)

_____. Canadian Gymnastics Federation Coaching Certification Manual; Level Two. Vanier City, Ontario: Canadian Gymnastics Federation, 1978.

B. Related Readings

Bilbrough, A., and Jones, P. Physical Education in the Primary School. Toronto: Hodder and Stoughton Publishers, 1968.

This book gives some positive and practical guidance regarding the content and methods of the primary school physical education program.

Bryant, R., and Oliver, E. Complete Elementary Physical Education Guide. West Nyack, N.Y.: Parker Publishing Co., 1974.

Filled with hundreds of ideas, this guide emphasizes that children learn by doing and that learning can be fun.

Carrasco, Roland. Gymnastique aux agrès, L'Activité du Débutante. Available in Canada from: Librairie Loisirs et Sports, Inc. (1974), 850 de la Reine, Québec, Qué. G1K 2S6.

The illustrations of introductory gymnastics techniques make this book an excellent resource even for those who do not read French.

Charteris, Jack. This is Gymnastics. Champaign, Illinois: Stipes Publishing Co., 1969.

This overview of gymnastics has valuable material for beginning programs.

Kirchner, Glenn. Physical Education for Elementary School Children. Dubuque, Iowa: Wm. C. Brown Co. Publishers, 1974.

Included in this book is an excellent chapter on gymnastics and movement activities.

Mosston, Muska. Teaching Physical Education. Columbus, Ohio: Charles E. Merrill Publishers, 1966.

Learning from command to discovery is the approach used in this book.

Sundby, Glen. International Gymnast Magazine. Sundby Sports Inc., 410 Broadway, Santa Monica, California, 90401.

A monthly publication illustrating top gymnasts and competitions, this magazine has sections on teaching progressions.

Taylor, B., Bajin, B., and Zivic, T. Olympic Gymnastics for Men and Women. Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice Hall Publishers, 1972.

This book includes information on all Olympic events, skills, error detection and teaching methods, as well as spotting techniques.

Y.M.C.A. Children at Play. 2160 Yonge Street, Toronto, Ontario M4S 2A9 (1974).

This book provides practical and imaginative guidelines for teaching children of pre-school age.

Y.M.C.A. Red/White/Blue Coaches' Manual. St. Vital Y.M.C.A., 5 Fermor Avenue West, Winnipeg, Manitoba R2M 0Y1 (1979).

In this manual, all participation skills are put into sequence to assist in their teaching. Lesson plans are also included.

C. Available Resources

Ms. Mo Tipples, the technical coordinator of the Manitoba Gymnastics Association, is extremely knowledgeable in all areas of gymnastics. Assistance in the provision of clinics, workshops, materials, and demonstrations by clubs is her forté. Ms. Tipples works out of the Administrative Centre for Recreation and Sport, 1700 Ellice Avenue, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3H 0B1 (Ph. 786-5641), and is available to answer inquiries at the Administrative Centre for Recreation and Sport on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays.

Level One Coaching Course is a 15-hour course offered at different locations in the province and at different times of the year. Information about this course can be obtained from the Manitoba Gymnastics Association technical coordinator at the above address. Level One covers teaching methods, a breakdown of all skills into dominant movement patterns, and lesson planning. This course provides a good base for teachers and is particularly helpful for those teaching at the elementary level.

Level Two Coaching Course is a 30-hour course which can be taken after completing all Level One requirements. It is a thorough course that reviews skill progressions, spotting techniques, physiology and mechanical principles. This course is excellent for coaches working with competitive gymnasts. The teaching methods and skills would be applicable to the high school and junior high areas.

Development Program is a program designed to assist coaches in formulating a total gymnastics program for their gymnasts. The Development Program involves an award system which can be used by the coaches in their yearly programs. It consists of a series of skills in logical sequence for which a badge is awarded when successfully completed by the gymnast. The first level of the Development Program is the Participation or Red/White/Blue series. The next level is the Achievement or Merit/Bronze/Silver/Gold series. All skills for both levels are diagramed and available in two booklets from the technical coordinator of the Manitoba Gymnastics Association, 1700 Ellice Avenue, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3H 0B1 (Ph. 786-5641).

D. Sample Lesson Plans

Lesson 1

Unit: GYMNASTICS GRADE TWO 28 CHILDREN 40 MINUTES

Theme: ROTATION AND SPRING

Concepts:

1. Rotation around the longitudinal axis and the lateral axis, with correct technique

2. Springing - basic concepts of springing and landing. To initiate a spring, contributing joints must flex, arms must be coordinated. In landing, the joints must flex to absorb the force over the greatest time as well as over the greatest distance possible.

Learning Objectives:

Children will be able to rotate around two axes, some more effectively than others. They will also understand a more efficient method of springing (flexing joints, coordinating arms).

Equipment: mats

Teaching Objectives:

1. To provide lots of activity for the children

2. To provide activities in at least four of the six dominant movement patterns

3. Fun, Fitness and Fundamentals

Lesson Content	Teaching Strategies
Opening Activity	
Running to music; when music stops, make a statue. Each time, balance on a different number of body parts.	Scatter formation
Mr. Freeze, Mr. Sun	Three children are named Mr. Freeze; three are named Mr. Sun. When a child is tagged by a Mr. Freeze, s(he) must remain frozen with legs apart, until a Mr. Sun goes under the legs and frees him/her. Play for 3-4 minutes.

Stretching Warm-up — Scatter formation, teacher directed

Trunk circles
Toe touches
Three different bridges

Review: Rolling skills — Children stand behind mats facing teacher.

What does a pencil look like? Can you make your body into that shape? Can you make your body into the shape of a ball? — Children should keep a very straight body when rolling around the longitudinal axis.

Can you roll like a ball? Remember to tuck your chin to your chest, and push off with your legs, then tuck your legs in again. — Review the correct technique for rolling forward. Have the children practice it a few times to see if they are making any errors, and correct them if they are.

New Skill: Springing

Everyone jump as high as you can. Now jump as high as you can without bending your legs. Can you jump very high? No. Try it again, bending your legs, with your hands on your hips.

Can you jump very high this way? Do you think your arms help you go higher? Yes. Now really bend your legs and use your arms. You can really go high. But you are noisy when you land. Can you change that? Good, land on your toes, then your heels--land through the foot. Everyone jumping and landing softly. Can you jump right over the mat? What is the best way to spring/jump as high as you can? Bend your knees, use your arms and try to land softly, toes, heels.

Closing Activity

Clap and Shake

Activity Records — Change all claps to jumps.

Comments

Need to review technique for forward rolls one more time. Children love to spring over benches and mats--use different objects to review.

Lesson 2

Unit: GYMNASTICS GRADE SEVEN 30 STUDENTS 40 MINUTES

Theme: ROTATION

Concepts:

Rotation around the lateral axis. Force must be applied away from the centre of gravity for rotation to occur. If the body parts are brought in close to the centre of gravity, the rotation will speed up.

Learning Objectives:

Students will be able to demonstrate forward rotation on different apparatus after reviewing the basic roll.

Equipment: Mats, boxes, benches, rolled up mats, springboard, ropes, rings, low high bar, parallel bars

Teaching Objectives:

1. To provide challenges for students with the use of equipment
2. To initiate cooperative group work in setting up and taking down equipment

Lesson Content	Teaching Strategies
Opening Activity: Running games	Scatter formation
Catch One, Catch All	
Partner Tag	
Crows and Cranes	Divide the class into two groups and have them line up facing each other, then lie down. One line are Crows and one line Cranes. When Crows are called, they must get up and chase the Cranes, trying to tag them before they reach a safety line. If any Cranes are caught, they join the Crows line. The children return to lying down on their lines, ready for the next call.
Stretching Warm-up	Scatter formation, teacher directed, or each squad leader gives an exercise
Trunk circles, straddle leans, deep lunges, forward, side, forward	

Review: Forward roll

Begin in a squat position, hands on floor, shoulder width apart, tuck the chin to the chest, extend legs and roll.

Each squad brings out mats; line up behind mats facing teacher.

Problems: stopping on head - tuck chin to chest, hips high, legs extend. Falling to one side - push off both legs equally. Practice.

Major Theme

How many ways can you rotate forward using the equipment?

Each squad is given a diagram of the equipment they will be setting out. They are given a few minutes to set it up.

Closing Activity

After all equipment is away, students lie on their backs, contracting their abdominal muscles, trying to get their lower back on the floor. Relax. Repeat.

Comments

Students want to set up the equipment using their own ideas. Next time allow this--more fun and a challenge.